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Recommendations that can be instituted immediately to improve articulation of foreign language programs are outlined in this article. The suggestions cover such topics as uniform curriculum for elementary and for secondary schools, student placement in college according to language proficiency, better communication between teachers and administrators, uniform foreign language entrance and degree requirements for colleges and universities, and stronger teacher training programs. (SS)

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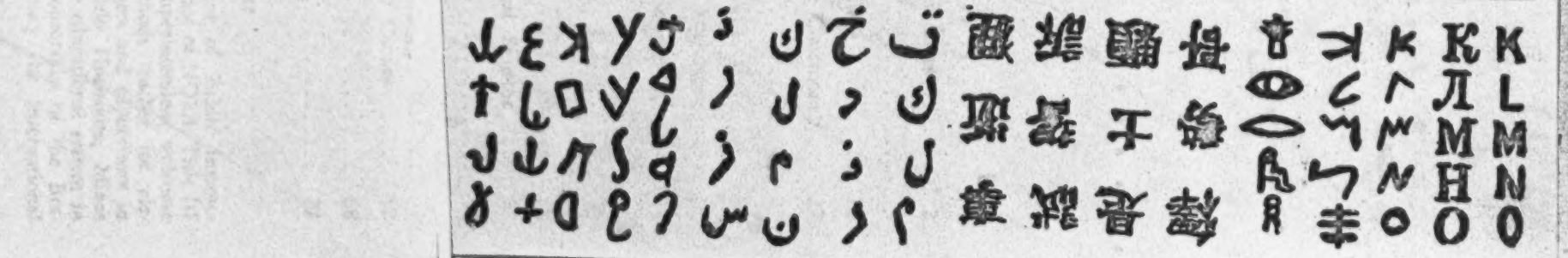

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CLUES TO ARTICULATION

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Today's foreign language teachers are more than mildly startled, dismayed and disconcerted by the omnipresent lack of articulation in foreign language programs between elementary and junior high school; between junior and senior high school; and between secondary school and college. Elementary pupils are still being ushered into junior high programs whose teachers have no knowledge of what FLES (Foreign Language Elementary Study) is. Junior high pupils are still being permitted to start a foreign language in the ninth grade (instead of the seventh or eighth), then placed in a heterogeneous tenth-grade class composed of all pupils who had one year of a foreign language at any time, anywhere, in any junior high school. Senior high pupils are still being permitted to drop a foreign language at the end of the tenth grade and then placed in a college class with students fresh from two years of it in some other high school in which they took the language in the eleventh and twelfth grades. Each school, each teacher, each foreign language department continues to remain methodologically independent and divorced from any communication or articulation with any other school. Entrance and graduation requirements vary not a little within one state. Goals are not even articulated. Testing procedures vary most of all leaving the tester flurried and harried and the tested tense and frustrated. Teacher training has been so inadequate and variable in quality in the field of foreign languages that the federal government has initiated the NDEA (National Defense Education Act) institutes to upgrade poorly trained foreign language teachers. Here we are, teaching a subject classified by the government as *vital* to national defense, in a class with the ever-multiplying sciences. Yet we are still treating foreign languages as a kind of luxurious, prestigious subject that only the intellectual élite can even consider as a possible elective. The fact that ten years after Sputnik we are still not achieving even a basic continuity forces us to make another plea for better transition between secondary school and college foreign language programs. A neighboring state has made realistic efforts in this direction. In fact we are indebted to the Indiana language program for many of the ideas in this article.

Articulation is the process whereby students can go from an elementary to a junior high foreign language class; from a junior high class to a senior high class; from a senior high class to a college foreign language class with the greatest continuity of level of materials and performance, the greatest uniformity of methods used, and the greatest standardization of expectations and goals. In other words one foreign language program in a school one step higher than the one the student just left should be a logical continuation of the one he has just experienced. If we are going to reduce our own frustrations and those of the student, we must begin applying some of the recommendations that we have heard for years. The following are some of the practices that need to and can be instituted immediately:

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I. Find out what other schools are doing about the problem. The impetus and the implementation of this discovery must come from the school for three reasons:
   1. An individual school knows best what it needs to know, wants to know, and how best to fit its information to its particular situation.
   2. An octopuslike superstructure or superadministrator may be given the power to do this if the schools do not.
   3. Some school has to take the plunge or we may find that the tide in favor of foreign languages may recede or dry up.

   In the case of articulation between a FLES program and one in junior high school, the impetus for articulation should come from at least the junior high school in which many of the FLES pupils will be enrolling. The ideal is to have a city supervisor of foreign languages who organizes and controls articulation between the various levels and grades in all the schools in the system. This central administrative function would provide a uniform curriculum in foreign languages for all schools. In this way the transition from FLES to junior high school, and junior high school to senior high school would be more realistic and effective. In communities which have only one high school but more than one junior high school and elementary school, the chairman of the high school foreign language department is the logical instigator of an articulated program in a given system. Just ten years ago the Lakewood Public Schools in Lakewood, Ohio, initiated this type of articulation. An example of a city system functioning with a foreign language supervisor is the Cleveland Public Schools, which have had a uniform foreign language pedagogy in all secondary schools including the elementary for close to fifty years. Even Western Reserve University (a private school) maintains the maximum resemblance to the methodology of the secondary schools in Cleveland. Furthermore the methods course and the teacher training at the University follow the same pedagogical philosophy as the secondary schools. As a result Cleveland teachers are more successfully trained. In turn, graduates of Cleveland schools score above national norms on national tests.

II. Evaluate your own program in terms of:
   1. What other schools are doing,
   2. What other schools of higher education expect.

III. Place students in college classes according to their proficiency in the foreign language, not according to the number of "years" of foreign language they have been given credit for in high school. No student should enter college without the results of a placement test in a foreign language recorded on his transcript. Tests should be given during the final week of the senior year in high school and administered by high school teachers even if it has to be done on Saturday! Standardized procedures for these tests should be implemented. If one school tests only the student's written work, the school that tests the student's oral performance as well as the written will have different results.

IV. Institute a series of regional (within a state) conferences for a discussion of ways to bring about

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greater articulation. Not everyone can or will attend these conferences but one who does will be a rich reservoir of ideas, information and motivation for improvement of articulation.

V. Open lines of communication that are not open now
   1. Between foreign language teachers and school administrators. If the administrator does not know you are dissatisfied, he cannot be blamed for doing nothing. Yet you can be blamed for expressing your dissatisfactions only to those who can do nothing.
   2. Between foreign language teachers and guidance counselors. We have all heard stories of counselors who purportedly steer students who have had three years of one language in high school into a new language in college, thus throwing away three years of background for a successful fourth or fifth year in that language. Let's explain why we are against this and other practices.

VI. Exchange class visitations with other foreign language teachers at different academic levels.

VII. Colleges and universities should bring their foreign language admission requirements into focus and review them or they should explain their foreign language requirements to the teachers and schools from which they draw their enrollment. Furthermore colleges and universities should arrive at a fairly standard foreign language entrance and graduation requirement. It is the lack of standardization which has caused such a chaotic and confusing transition between college and high school foreign language courses.

VIII. High schools should work together to formulate goals in foreign language teaching. This will give goals to schools where there are none or where they have never actually been spelled out specifically. It will also balance the competence that students from various high schools have in different language skills.

IX. Colleges should work together to formulate goals. High schools would then be able to aim more consistently at preparing foreign language students for college. Complaints from college students to high school teachers vary from: "We should have had more grammar. English is used almost all the time" to "I am lost! The instructor never speaks English." or "The professor speaks only English in literature classes."

X. Reward students for language competence. On the high school level medals or books can be awarded in a yearly assembly.

XI. Colleges should introduce transition courses for students who are competent or weak in one or more language skills.

XII. Enlist college students in panel discussions with college faculty who are attempting to present the basis for amelioration of articulation. Students can give you a very fresh, realistic, objective appraisal. They can also contribute extremely helpful ideas.

XIII. Strengthen teacher training programs.
   1. Award scholarships to encourage outstanding foreign language students to teach their major languages.
   2. Reappraise foreign language teacher requirements with a view to fitting them to the level on which the student is

going to teach.

3. Reevaluate college teaching in the light of the effect it has on prospective teachers.
4. Offer college courses in the foreign language that give an understanding of the culture, history, art, music, and civilization of the country whose language is being studied.
5. Carefully select faculty and materials for the methods course.
   a. The course should be taught by a teacher with successful experience as a public school teacher of the foreign language.
   b. Special classes should be offered for each language group, that is, Romance, Teutonic, Slavic, and others.
   c. Demonstration classes should be taught by expert teachers.
6. Reappraise certification laws. Requirements should relate to actual competence. If a person is found to be competent to conduct a class in a foreign language, he should not be required to take a course in speaking or oral drill.
7. Institute cooperative programs between several colleges and universities. A summer institute might be one way of handling this. Thus the best teachers and the best facilities in the region could be available.
8. A strong program of follow-up help for beginning teachers is needed. Some beginning teachers who had the potential of master teachers have entered other professions because no one could tell them how to attack and solve their first-year problems.
9. Offer intermediary degrees for work beyond the Master of Arts (M.A.) degree. Offer a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in foreign language education instead of just in literature.

XV. Involve strong foreign language teachers in committee efforts to solve common problems.

The instituting of one or more of these practices will signify that foreign languages are vital to the future of American education. At Western Illinois University the following procedures have been put into practice:

1. Placement tests are given all students with previous language courses.
2. Advanced credit, up to twelve quarter hours, is allowed for students who place in third-year courses.
3. Transition courses in reading, writing, and speaking are provided for those who are deficient in one of these skills.
4. Attention is given to curriculum for teachers, offering at the advanced level a course in literature, language, civilization, and culture, as well as, language courses which are specifically designed for teachers.

He who is ignorant of foreign langauges knows not his own.

—Goethe